

**CLAIMS**

We claim:

5           1. A purified protein having ELF3 protein biological activity, the amino acid sequence of which comprises an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(a) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or SEQ ID NO: 13;

(b) amino acid sequences that differ from SEQ ID NO: 2 or SEQ ID NO: 13 by one or more conservative amino acid substitutions; and

10           (c) amino acid sequences having at least 91% sequence identity to the sequences specified in (a) or (b).

15           2. The purified protein of claim 1, comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

20           3. The purified protein of claim 1, comprising an amino acid sequence that differs from the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 by one or more conservative amino acid substitutions.

25           4. The purified protein of claim 1, comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 91% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO: 2.

30           5. The purified protein of claim 4, comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 93% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO: 2.

35           6. The purified protein of claim 5, comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO: 2.

40           7. The purified protein of claim 1, comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 13.

45           8. The purified protein of claim 1, comprising an amino acid sequence that differs from the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 13 by one or more conservative amino acid substitutions.

50           9. The purified protein of claim 1, comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 91% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO: 13.

10. The purified protein of claim 9, comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 93% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO: 13.

11. The purified protein of claim 10, comprising an amino acid sequence having at 5 least 95% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO: 13.

12. The purified protein of claim 1 bound by an ELF3 protein specific binding agent.

13. The purified protein of claim 12, wherein the ELF3 protein specific binding agent 10 comprises an anti-ELF3 protein antibody.

14. An isolated ELF3 protein, the amino acid sequence of which consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

15. An isolated ELF3 protein consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 13.